

PLEASANT SARATOGA.

OBSERVATIONS AT THE MOST POPULAR SUMMER RESORT.

It is the Paradise of "Have Beens"—The Ancient Beau and the Faded "Old Girl"—Both Feet at Home There—Why Gambling Is Not Suppressed at Saratoga.

SARATOGA, N. Y., July, 1890.

I sit sometimes on a hotel veranda in this beautiful town and watch the motley crowd pass to and fro. I ask myself, "What does it all mean? Each of these minds must be pursuing a different train of thought, else why these different expressions, these ever-varying attitudes, these various tones of voice, these glances of contempt, speed? Why? Because some of them are 'can be's,' some 'can't be's,' some 'would like to be's,' and some 'have beens.' Saratoga is the paradise of 'have beens.' Here the ancient beau, padded, powdered, and periwigged, and the 'old girl,' painted, and plastered, both feel at home. It makes them puff to climb the steps of the monster hotels, but when they get their second wind they feel quite young for an hour or so. There goes a political 'has been'—a dead issue. He was Greenback candidate for Governor and came within 100,000 votes of being elected. You might ask me the difference between the society 'has been' and the political 'has been.' She travels on virtue which she once had, and he on virtue which he never had.

Ah, here comes a "would-like-to-be" with her mother. Last year a certain well-known "would-like-to-be" came up here with a "can't-be" instead of her "mother." It was a great mistake to leave her "mother" at home; possibly the poor old lady was ailing. Anyway, the hotel folks, for some reason or other, wanted the very room occupied by the

fair "would-like-to-be." It was cruel, for the crowd of social and political "have-beens" missed her very much.

For such a person, Saratoga is nothing without a mother. Early in June a New York paper contained this advertisement: "Wanted, an elderly lady with refined face, gray hair and embonpoint if possible, as a companion." That was some poor lonely lady in search of a "mother." Furnished up in a neat black silk, with puffs of gray hair under a lace cap, this "mother" will make her appearance at the Springs after a few weeks' rehearsal. But she hasn't got over her frightened look. She sits on the edge of her chair, looks like a cat in a strange house, and never converses. "Ma, is so diffident, you know."

There comes Miss Faith O'Frolicsome. Faith is a diaphanous creature, mentally and physically. She is a "would-like-to-be," and has her mother with her. Timothy O'Frolicsome—her father now in heaven—

had put up my immortal soul against that!

"And you'll win, of course," suggested one of her male companions with a peculiar smile.

"Can't tell yet; no drawing till the first of the year."

"Oh, some lottery business?"

"Yes; I've married him."

Say our Mohammedan friends: "Cards, women and wine, these be your Christian vices!" Saratoga would therefore be a fine school for a Mussulman to study these vices of ours in their fullest development. Said Mohammed: "Accursed be games of chance!" To the Christian way of thinking, life would be robbed of half its charm if it could be reduced to a certainty. The exquisite power of fascination about life at the Springs lies therein that here nothing is reduced to a certainty.

"What a grand old lady that is just alighting from her carriage! What dignity, graciousness and generosity animate her refined dowager face!"

"Yes, Mother Winch is very generous to the boys, especially on short loans with diamonds as collateral."

"Gracious Heaven, isn't there anything genuine here? Come, let's go and drink some of the waters, Sir Cynic."

"Or, possibly, they too, are not what they pretend to be. These delicious rills, sparkling and bubbling, titillating

the lip with their delightfully intoxicating gases, are salted."—Lulu Lee, in Chicago Ledger.

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"He smokes cigs, drinks pony brandies, and swears—only think of it!"

"How old is she?" I inquired, for I hadn't seen her yet.

"Forty—sunny-side, you know. Twice married—real grass widow, now."

"Ah, thanks; I never patronize the turf."

A little later I asked: "Who is the tall, queenly woman, dressed in such bad taste?"

"Why that's Mrs. Skidmore-Frumpy. The Frumpys are very rich, and spend money like water."

"Ah, yes; Frumpy of the 'Can't Kill Kidney Cure.'"

"And the pale, thin, intense face near her?"

"Sh! not so loud. That's Melanie Fitz Mullionie. Don't you remember, she failed last season as an actress."

"But tell me, who's the wild-eyed, wild-haired, wild-mannered—"

"That! Oh, nothing much. It failed as a sculptress, then as an artist—"

"And what did the sprightly being with big eyes, short hair, and so many teeth fail as?"

"A wife!"

You ask me why they don't stop the gambling here? Because they don't want to. It pays them to let it alone. All

nature gambles. The fox does, when he enters the hen roost; the hawk, when he swoops down upon the spring pullet; the cat, when she jumps upon the table; the man-eater, when he enters the hunting camp; the coon, when he sneaks into the corn patch. There is a fascination about taking chances. Here, too, the social "can't be" has his revenge. He isn't ashamed to be seen in the club house, or pool room, or on the race track. Women are natural gamblers. Eve knew that it was a hundred to one that the apple would disagree with her; but she took her chances. Excluded from the club house at Saratoga, the women give full rein to their penchant by putting up their money on the races—some openly, others through an agent. Said a superb social "can't be" on the race track:

"Betting is of divine origin. The creation of the world was all speculation!" Then holding up an ungloved hand, upon one of the fingers of which glistened a thousand-dollar diamond, she exclaimed: "For instance, you see that ring. I

have put up my immortal soul against that!"

"And you'll win, of course," suggested one of her male companions with a peculiar smile.

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